



EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Public Affairs Section

Accredited in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu

For Immediate Release

July 19, 2013

United States Welcomes PNG's Legislative Steps against Human Trafficking

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea: The United States welcomes the encouraging news regarding the passing of legislation to combat human trafficking in Papua New Guinea. The People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons bill amends the criminal code of Papua New Guinea and gives law enforcement and prosecutors the necessary tools to address trafficking crimes. This important amendment to the criminal code is a significant step towards combating modern-day slavery.

This achievement can be credited in part to the partnership between the International Organization for Migration and the PNG Department of Justice and Attorney General. An important contribution was their baseline data assessment report launched in March 2013 and the tireless work of the National Human Trafficking Committee (NHTC).

U.S. Ambassador Walter North said, "Thanks to Attorney General Kua and his team for their leadership on this important issue. Parliament's action and vigorous implementation of the new legislation offer hope that this scourge can be eliminated in Papua New Guinea."

The U.S. Department of State's Office to Combat and Monitor Trafficking in Persons is funding a project to combat trafficking in human beings in Papua New Guinea through the International Organization for Migration. The project aims to strengthen the capacity of the PNG Government to prevent human trafficking, prosecute traffickers, and protect victims of trafficking.

The United States of America has a particular interest in combating Trafficking in Persons. Human trafficking or human exploitation can occur domestically or internationally, any time a person is coerced or forced or deceived into involuntary servitude. Trafficking victimizes perhaps as many as 27 million men, women, and children worldwide.

The United States works actively with the government of Papua New Guinea not only to combat trafficking, but to help implement programs to combat corruption, increase transparency and improve governance in extractive industries, and improve the rule of law.

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Tel: +675 321-1455

pdportmoresby@state.gov

<http://portmoresby.usembassy.gov>

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